

Historic, Archive Document

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INVITE BIRDS TO YOUR HOME



. . . bringing beauty

. . . soil and water protection

. . . control of insect pests



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

PA-840
ISSUED FEBRUARY 1968

PLANTS FOR BIRDS, BEAUTY, PROTECTION



AUTUMN OLIVE

Elaeagnus umbellata

Bird use: 25 species

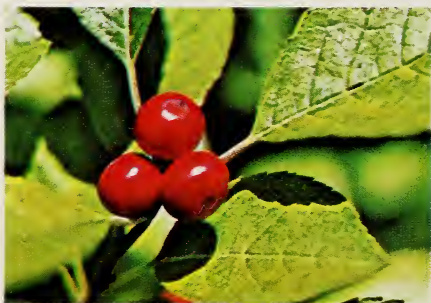
Ornamental values: Large, spreading shrub with gray-green foliage — fragrant, small, yellowish bloom; abundant, speckled, cardinal fruits.

Adaptations: Deep, moist to dry soil; sun to light shade; cardinal variety, winter hardy.

In bloom: May-July

In fruit: September-February

Sources: Commercial nurseries, several State nurseries.



HOLLY

Ilex spp.
Winterberry illus.

Bird use: 22 species

Ornamental values: Numerous varieties—shrub to tree form; evergreen or shedding —glossy dark-green foliage; small whitish blooms; bright-red to yellow fruits.

Adaptations: Wet to well-drained soil; sun to shade.

In fruit: August-June

Sources: Commercial nurseries, wilding transplants, or cuttings.



SILKY DOGWOOD

Cornus amomum

Bird use: 10 species

Ornamental values: Medium shrub—white flat flower clusters and blue fruit clusters; bronze fall foliage; reddish-purple winter stems.

Adaptations: Wet to dry soil; sun to light shade.

In bloom: May-July

In fruit: August-September

Sources: Commercial nurseries, State nurseries, wilding transplants and cuttings.



SUMAC

Rhus spp.
Staghorn illus.

Bird use: 17 species

Ornamental values: Low to tall shrubs that have interesting shapes—palmlike or trifoliate leaves, greenish flower spikes, conical clusters of red fruits, brilliant fall foliage.

Adaptations: Well-drained to very dry shallow soil; sun.

In bloom: June-July

In fruit: September-May

Sources: Root cuttings, commercial nurseries.



CHERRY

Prunus spp.
Chokecherry illus.

Bird use: 40 species

Ornamental values: Small to large trees—small fine-toothed leaves, yellow in fall; showy white flower clusters or drooping spikes; small bright-red to black fruits.

Adaptations: Moist to dry soil; sun to light shade.

In bloom: April-June

In fruit: Bird cherry, June; chokecherry, July-September; pin cherry, August-October; Black cherry, July-November.

Sources: Commercial nurseries, wilding transplants.



HAWTHORN

Crataegus spp.

Bird use: 25 species

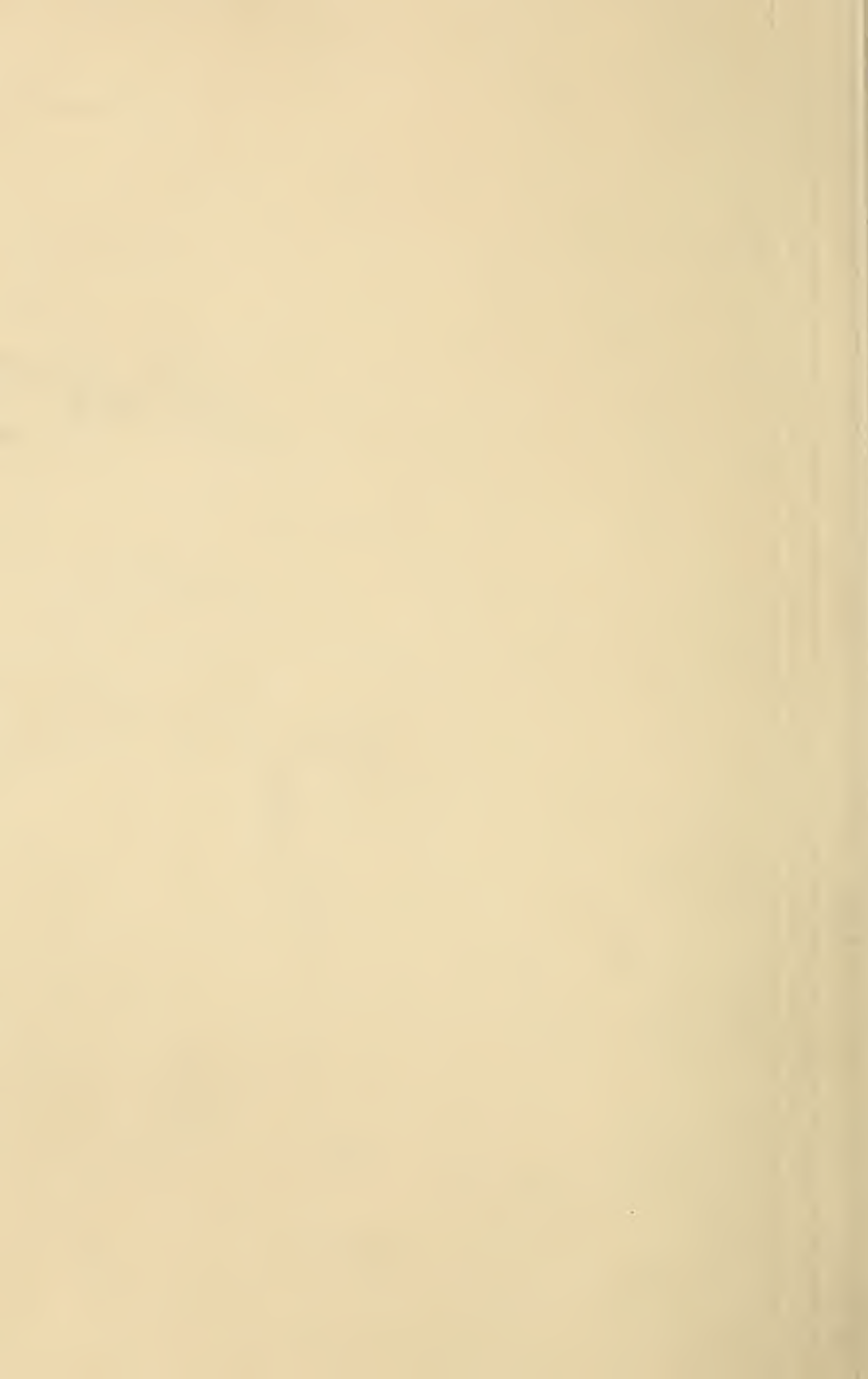
Ornamental values: Small, domed tree—pale-green toothed leaves; abundant, clustered, white flowers; orange to red fruits.

Adaptations: Deep, moist to dry soil; sun.

In bloom: May-June

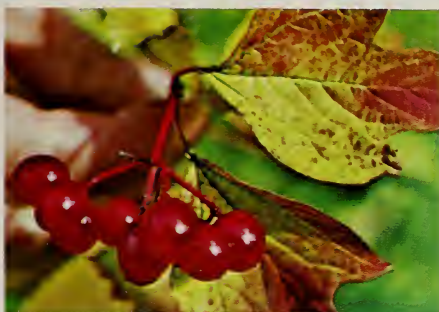
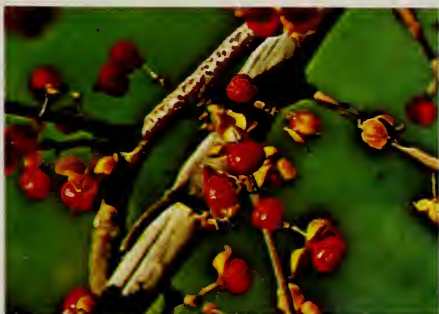
In fruit: October-March (Variable)

Sources: Commercial nurseries.



GRAY-STEMME

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*Bird use:* 16 species*Ornamental values:* Thicket-forming medium shrubs—small, flat, white flower clusters; white berries on pink stems.*Adaptations:* Well-drained to dry soil; sun.*In bloom:* June*In fruit:* August-November*Sources:* Wilding transplants and cuttings.**AMERICAN CRANBERRYBUSH***Viburnum trilobum**Bird use:* 34 species*Ornamental values:* Upright tall shrub with maplelike foliage—showy, white, flat clusters of flowers; glossy scarlet fruit clusters.*Adaptations:* Deep, wet to well-drained soil; sun to light shade.*In bloom:* May-June*In fruit:* September-May*Sources:* Commercial nurseries, some State nurseries, wilding transplants or cuttings.**BITTERSWEET***Celastrus scandens**Bird use:* 10 species*Ornamental values:* Twining vine with pale-green foliage — greenish flowers; bright-red berries in yellow or orange husks.*Adaptations:* Well-drained to dry soil; sun to light shade.*In bloom:* May-June*In fruit:* September-December*Sources:* Commercial nurseries, some State nurseries, cuttings.

AMUR HONEYSUCKLE *Lonicera maackii*
Bird use: 8 species
Ornamental values: Large shrub—white blooms; red fruits.
Adaptations: Well-drained to dry soil; sun to shade.
In bloom: July-August
Sources: Commercial nurseries.

CRABAPPLE *Malus spp.*
Bird use: 18 species
Ornamental values: Small trees—showy white to pink blooms; red, orange, and yellow fruits.
Adaptations: Moist to dry soil; sun.
In bloom: April-May
Sources: Commercial nurseries, grafting, budding.

FIRETHORN *Pyracantha spp.*
Bird use: 17 species
Ornamental values: Medium shrubs—white blooms; orange or red berries.
Adaptations: Moist to well-drained soil; sun.
In bloom: June
Sources: Commercial nurseries.

FLOWERING DOGWOOD *Cornus florida*
Bird use: 36 species
Ornamental values: Large shrub to small tree with layered foliage—highly ornamental white to reddish blooms; bunched bright-red fruits; bronze fall color.
Adaptations: Well-drained to dry soil; sun to shade.
In bloom: April-June
In fruit: September-February
Sources: Commercial nurseries.

HIGHBUSH BLUEBERRY *Vaccinium corymbosum*
Bird use: 36 species
Ornamental values: Medium shrub with dark-green leathery leaves—small greenish-white blooms; bright-blue berries; scarlet fall color.
Adaptations: Wet to dry soil; sun.
In bloom: June-August
In fruit: July-October
Sources: Commercial nurseries, wilding transplants.

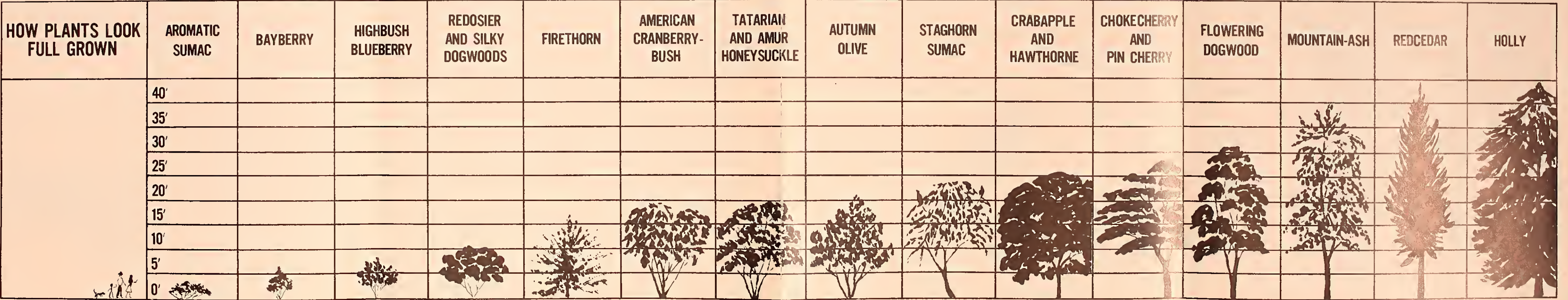
MOUNTAIN-ASH *Sorbus spp.*
Bird use: 15 species
Ornamental values: Medium tree with attractive compound leaves—flat, white flower clusters; bright-red or orange berry clusters.
Adaptations: Moist to dry soil; sun.
In bloom: May-June
In fruit: August-March
Sources: Commercial nurseries, wilding transplants.

REDCEDAR *Juniperus virginiana*
Bird use: 68 varieties
Ornamental values: Medium evergreen tree (many varieties)—dense blue-green needles; small, dusty-blue, berrylike cones.
Adaptations: Moist to dry soil; sun to light shade.
In fruit: September-May
Sources: Commercial nurseries, wilding transplants.

REDOSIER DOGWOOD *Cornus stolonifera*
Bird use: 19 species
Ornamental values: Medium shrub—white blooms; white berries; red stems in winter.
Adaptations: Wet to well-drained soil; sun to shade.
In bloom: May-July
In fruit: July-September
Sources: Commercial nurseries, wilding transplants, cuttings.

TATARIAN HONEYSUCKLE *Lonicera tatarica*
Bird use: 17 species
Ornamental values: Large shrub—pink to yellow blooms; red twinned berries.
Adaptations: Well-drained to dry soil; sun to shade.
In bloom: June-July
In fruit: July-September
Sources: Commercial nurseries.

VIRGINIA CREEPER *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*
Bird use: 37 species
Ornamental values: Ground or climbing vine—blue to black berries; red in fall.
Adaptations: Moist to dry soil; sun to shade.
In fruit: August-February
Sources: Wilding transplants, cuttings, commercial nurseries.



INVITE BIRDS TO YOUR HOME

The songs of birds and their colorful, sprightly activities add much to the joys of country or suburban living. Birds help reduce the insect pests that attack flowers, lawns, gardens, and people.

Perhaps you've had some experience with *manmade* devices that attract birds—feeders, birdbaths, birdhouses, nesting shelves, and the like. But here's a *natural* way to invite them to your home and grounds.

Plant shrubs, trees, vines, and other plants that serve the various needs of birds. Such plants not only attract birds, but they can also bring beauty to your property.

The plants shown here are pleasing both to songsters and to the human eye. With the same stroke that you get your landscaping done, you provide places where birds can feed, sing, court, nest, rest, hide, and do all the other things that birds do.

Birds' appetites lean toward "berried treasure," and their favorite berries are usually bright-hued and decorative. Their needs for shelter are met by hedges and other dense shrubbery that can fit handsomely in the backyard scene.

Trees for songbird concerts and nest building also provide welcome shade and ornamentation for the human householder. The sylvan pool or pond built to serve the wildlife community also serves you and your family as a recreation area.

Mix and Blend

Birds like variety. Bear this in mind when you blend the plants attractive to birds into the conservation-planned landscape of both your yard and grounds. Plan a rich intermingling of species, sizes, and shapes of plants. And lay out your plantings in varied patterns. Give birds a wide choice for their various activities—from the crowns of tall trees all the way down to the low seed-heads in flowerbeds and lawns.

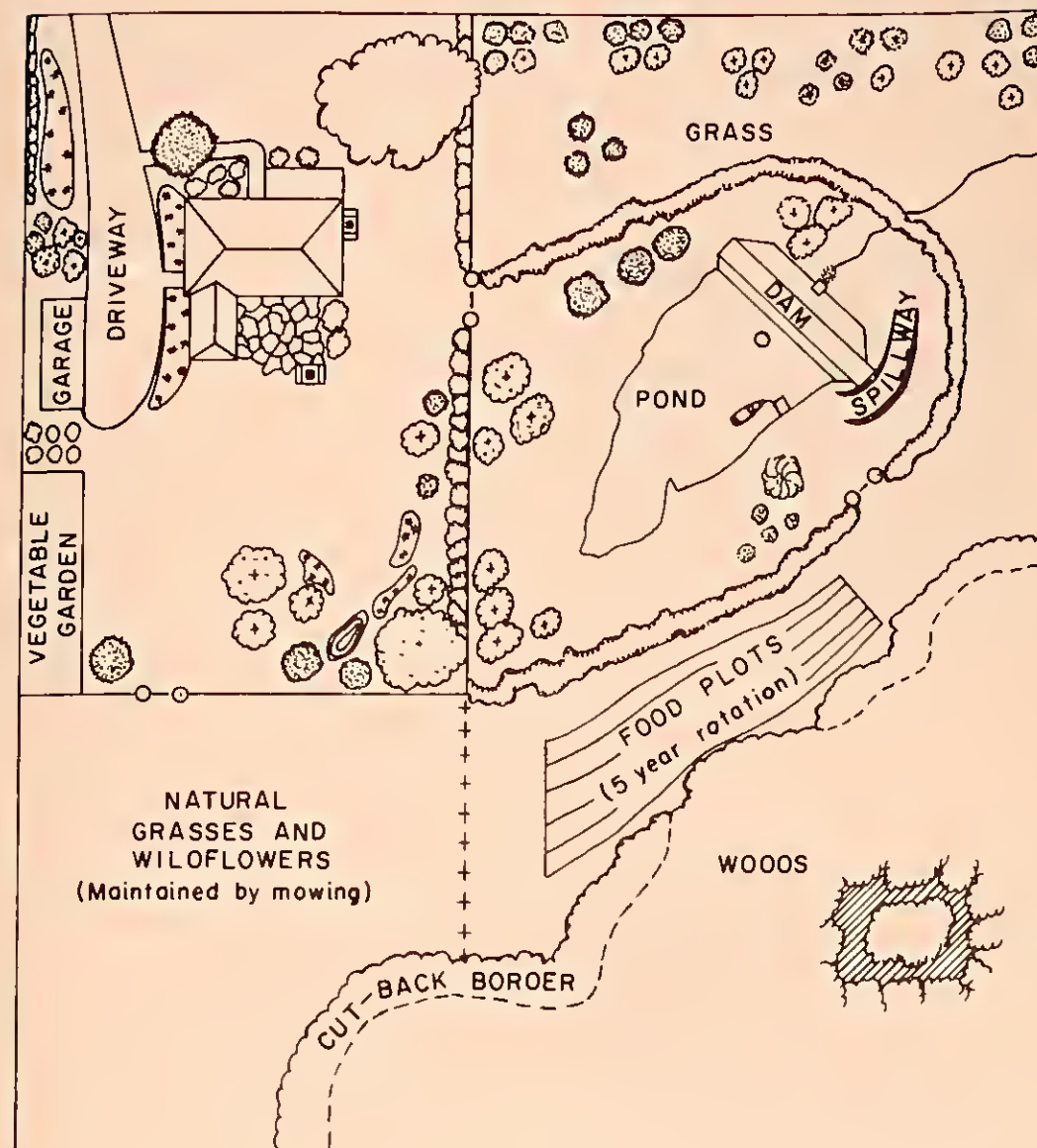
You have any number of options as to hardwoods and conifers; vines, shrubs, and trees; grasses; flowers; and even weeds to create a landscape conservation design—one that will bring birds outside your window. If your yard is small, you'll have to depend mostly on single specimen plants. But if you have extensive grounds you can use hedges, clumps, feeding strips, and other massed plantings. If you have a wooded area, a small clearing lends variety to the landscape for birds.

By studying the plants already present along with your general plan for landscaping, you can bring in a diversity of plant forms, food producers, and shelter plants that would otherwise be missing. Many common shade trees and landscape shrubs, for example, yield little food for birds. Here you may work in autumn olive, honeysuckle, or other good fruit-bearing shrubs. Yards and grounds that have only leaf-shedding trees and shrubs are improved by the addition of junipers, cedars, yews, and other evergreens that provide welcome shelter to birds in winter.

Be sure to think about being able to *see* the birds. Put the plants where they can be observed from a window, patio, or terrace. And choose those reported to have high bird use for best results. Careful attention to the periods of bloom and availability of choice foods makes it possible to have a succession of floral displays and bird foods throughout the year.

Birds Outside Your Window

CONSERVATION TREATMENTS FOR A SUBURBAN LOT—LARGE OR SMALL



LEGEND

- Pool or birdbath
- Flowerbed
- Shade tree
- Large conifer
- Low conifer
- Ornamental or garden shrubs
- Shrubs for birds
- Trees for birds
- Shrub hedge
- Weeping willow
- Woodland clearing
- Natural or planted hedgerow
- Conifer screen with planted shrub borders



CONSERVATION PLANNING

The design to the left is a small-scale sample of the conservation treatments applied on farms and other large rural properties in the Northeast. It shows, first, (top left) what can be done on a house lot of ordinary size. Then, if you have additional space, it shows other treatments that can be added.

You need to consider, when planting for birds, such things as soil, slope, drainage, exposure aspects, and climate as well as your personal wishes. Added benefits occur where plantings can be sited to provide shade, soil stabilization, and control of potentially damaging water runoff.



Food Plots.—You can set up a strip-cropping rotation of bird foods in small fields. Plant a different strip each year. Corn, buckwheat, sunflowers, and Japanese and German millets are good foods for birds. You can plow a different strip each year and let nature do the planting. A good rotation opens strips 1-3-5-2-4 successively.



Cutback Borders and Clearings.—Cut your fireplace wood from along the edges of the woods. Cut all trees over 4 inches in diameter in a strip 20 feet or more deep along the edge. Native shrubs, vines, wildflowers, and herbs will soon fill this strip. You'll find it full of birds too. Clear-cut small blocks about 50 feet square inside the woods, especially around nut- or fruit-bearing trees. Birds concentrate in clearings, and nut or fruit yields increase.



"Living Screens".—Screen with wind-break plantings unpleasant views and areas where privacy is desired. Conifers bordered by such shrubs as autumn olive, dogwood, or honeysuckle make effective screens.



Water Areas.—When you build a small pool or pond you'll get an extra dividend in birds. Border these watering places with contoured hedges and plant clumps of shrubs and conifers in corners well back from the water. Willows are especially attractive to orioles, warblers, and catbirds.

Grassed and Open Areas.—Where you have extra space for birds, you can install measures similar to those employed by conservation farmers. Some birds, such as the field sparrow and meadowlark, like the open areas of natural grasses and wildflowers. Here you need only to keep out woody plants by an occasional mowing.



"Living Fences".—Hedgerows across open fields, either planted or encouraged to come in naturally, furnish a diversity of plant life that adds both numbers and species of birds to your lot. Autumn olive, Tatarian honeysuckle, and dogwoods are good for planting. If you plow a 6-foot strip in which you set poles about every 20 feet and string wire or stout cord between the poles, perching birds will do the planting.

FOR HELP

You can get further information on plants and conservation methods at your local soil conservation district office. The Soil Conservation Service, as part of its assistance to conservation districts, helps individual land users apply many soil and water conservation practices that increase wildlife. County agents, commercial nurserymen, landscape architects, and bird societies can also help.

U. S. Department of Agriculture pamphlets that may be helpful are:
Soil Conservation at Home (AIB-244)
Making Land Produce Useful Wildlife (FB-2035)
More Wildlife Through Soil and Water Conservation (AIB-175)
Autumn Olive For Wildlife and Other Conservation Uses (L-458)
Growing the Flowering Dogwood (G-88)

Plants listed in this brochure are adapted and useful in the Northeast and as far south and west as Virginia and Kentucky.



